

**APPROVED MINUTES  
OF THE CITY  
COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF EAST GRAND FORKS  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2015 – 5:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*The Work Session of the East Grand Forks City Council for August 11, 2015 was called to order by Council President Mark Olstad at 5:00 P.M.*

**CALL OF ROLL:**

*On a Call of Roll the following members of the East Grand Forks City Council were present: Mayor Lynn Stauss, Council President Mark Olstad, Council Vice-President Chad Grassel, Council Members Clarence Vetter, Mike Pokrzywinski, Craig Buckalew, Henry Tweten, and Marc DeMers.*

*Karla Anderson, Finance Director; Dan Boyce, Water & Light Manager; Nancy Ellis, City Planner; Ron Galstad, City Attorney; Paul Gorte, EDA Director; Mike Hedlund, Police Chief; Charlotte Helgeson, Library Director; Gary Larson, Fire Chief; David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Megan Nelson, Executive Assistant; and Jason Stordahl, Public Works Director.*

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:**

*The Council President Determined a Quorum was present*

**1. Toward Zero Death Enforcement Grant – Mike Hedlund**

Mr. Hedlund stated that the Police Department along with the Polk County Sheriff's Department and the Crookston Police Department had been awarded the Toward Zero Death enforcement grant. He explained it was very similar to the Safe and Sober grants the City had received before. He added that East Grand Forks will be the fiscal agents for this grant. Mayor Stauss asked how much the grant was for. Mr. Hedlund stated it was for approximately \$30,000 to be split between the agencies and there would be a 50% match for any equipment purchases.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

**2. Request to Change Sewage Ordinance Discussion – David Murphy**

Mr. Murphy informed the Council that he had received a phone call and email about the request to have an ordinance changed. He explained the current sewage ordinance states the resident is responsible for their line all the way to the connection to the City's main and the request is to change that to say the property line. He added how some cities have their ordinance that way but there are issues when it comes to where blockages are located in the line and who would be responsible for the costs when there was. He stated how the current ordinance works well. Mr. Galstad stated that according to the League of Minnesota Cities that many cities have the same ordinance as East Grand Forks. Discussion followed about how situations where residents have

had issues, that these repairs can be costly, and how the Council is in favor of keeping the ordinance the way it is.

### **3. Lot Sale Discussion – David Murphy**

Mr. Murphy stated that Mr. Ringstad was present at the meeting to discuss this item. Mr. Frank Ringstad informed the Council about the history of the VFW organization, their building, and how they have helped out in the community. He explained they are looking at the future and wanted to start a discussion with the City to see if they would be able to purchase a portion of the corner lot so they are able to add a patio on the side of the building which would improve that side of the building. Council member Tweten commented how he had been a member of the VFW for many years but the issue was the Council was responsible for building the tax base and this lot provided that opportunity.

Discussion followed about the size of the lot, that the VFW does pay property taxes, and how the Council may consider allowing a portion of the lot to be leased for a period of time. Mr. Ringstad stated they just wanted to start the conversation and see if it was a possibility. Council member Pokrzywinski asked what the timeline was for a potential project. Mr. Ringstad stated it depended on if it was a purchase or lease of the property. More discussion followed about the possibility of getting an appraisal on the property and if there was a patio how it would have to be a secured area.

This item will be brought back to a future Work Session for further discussion.

### **4. Special Assessment Discussion – David Murphy**

Ms. Nelson explained to the Council how there had been a project in 2004 completed in the Water's Edge area that included a sanitary main and lift station. She informed the special assessments were reapportioned in 2007 when this area became Water's Edge 3<sup>rd</sup> Addition. She stated the prices on the lots included special assessments when advertised and sold. She added how the special assessments in question had not been included in the total of special assessments. She said staff recommended transferring funds from the lot sale fund to the special assessment fund for these specials which would reduce the overall sale price of the lots. Council member Vetter asked if the specials were paid from the general fund. Ms. Anderson said no and that it was paid from the special assessment fund.

This item will be referred to a City Council Meeting for action.

### **5. Special Election Discussion – Mark Olstad**

Council President Olstad commented how holding a special election was brought up again. He stated how if it was passed it would show the Legislators that there was support for a sales tax. He said if a special election was held the Council would have to inform the County a minimum of 74 days prior to the election. He added that with the session starting later the City could hold a special election in February or March and have the results when making the request at the Legislature. Council member Pokrzywinski commented that he asked to discuss this and that he would like to hold the election before making the request at that State level. He added the Council needs to decide on a date and what was going to be included. He asked if a smaller group should be formed and bring back a recommendation to the Council. Discussion followed

about how a plan needs to be developed for a special election, what should all be included in the request, if a smaller committee should be formed, and how much a special election could cost. Council President Olstad asked for the Council to bring back ideas to the next work session.

## **6. Other**

Council President Olstad stated there was a request to extend the car show permit through the end of September and asked if there were any issues with that. There were none. He also announced the League of Minnesota Cities sent out the schedule for regional meetings and this year the meeting will be held on October 20<sup>th</sup> in Crookston from 1:00pm until 7:00pm. He added there was more information found on their website.

Mr. Murphy reminded the Council about the meeting with the Bonding Committee at 9:15am the next morning out at the lagoons and how the committee will be on a tight schedule leaving by 10:00am. Council member Pokrzywinski asked if there was a designated speaker. Mr. Murphy said it was going to be Mr. Boppre. Council member Tweten announced there was an all you can eat corn feed at the American Legion if anyone was interested in attending. Mayor Stauss reminded the Council that Heritage Days was taking place this week. Council member Vetter asked about the information regarding the Red Lake Watershed District and how it was changed. Ms. Nelson stated she would look into in and let the Council know.

## **ADJOURN:**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER GRASSEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VETTER, TO ADJOURN THE AUGUST 11, 2015 WORK SESSION OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL AT 5:55 P.M.**

*Voting Aye: Vetter, Pokrzywinski, Buckalew, Tweten, Olstad, Grassel, and DeMers.*

*Voting Nay: None.*

---

David Murphy, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer